



Montana

## Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

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### **EMBARGOED UNTIL 4/15/07**

#### **290,000 Montana Volunteers Give 37.9 Million Hours of Service in 2006**

(Helena) --- Up from its number 10 spot last year, Montana moves up three points to number seven for its rate of volunteering and holds onto its top 10 ranking for the second year, according to a report received by the Governor's Commission on Community Service.

According to the Volunteering in America: 2007 State Trends and Ranking in Civic Life report by the Corporation for National and Community Service, Montana brought in a rate of volunteering of 37.7 percent, placing Montana well above the national average of 26.7 percent.

Montana's high volunteerism rate positions them with:

- the fifth-highest number of volunteer service hours per capita;
- and the tenth-highest state ranking for volunteer retention with an average of 71.8 percent of Montana volunteers who served in 2005 continuing to serve in 2006.

The federal government has produced, for the first time ever, a Civic Life Index to measure civic participation on a state-by-state basis. The Civic Life Index is an indicator of a state's social capital and includes twelve indicators that measure volunteering, voting, neighborhood engagement, nonprofit infrastructure, and religious infrastructure.

Additionally with data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau, the report presents an overview of formal volunteering at both the national and regional levels, as well as state rankings on volunteering indicators such as volunteering rate and intensity and volunteering among seniors and students and its impact on civic life.

#### **So, how does Montana measure up?**

Montana takes first in the nation on the Civic Life Index with a score of 126.

- In 2006, 290,000 Montana volunteers dedicated 37.9 million hours of service.
- Montana had the seventh-highest rate for Baby Boomers, the ninth-highest rate for older adults, and the 10<sup>th</sup> highest rate for young adults.
- In addition to the 290,000 Montana volunteers in 2006, nearly 32,000 people participated informally by working with their neighbors to improve the community.
- Overall, 45.9 percent of people in Montana engaged in civic life by volunteering, working with their neighbors, or attending public meetings.

*(more)*

## **Financial Impact of Volunteering in Montana**

In 2006, residents of Montana contributed 37,935,510 hours of volunteer service totaling \$684,356,600 of service to the State (Independent Sector's annual estimation of the dollar value of a volunteer hour, which is currently \$18.04).

"More than 9,000 people of all ages and backgrounds are helping to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through 88 national service projects across Montana," said Governor Brian Schweitzer. "During National Volunteer Week and throughout the year, Montanans are giving of their time to tutor and mentor children, coordinate after-school programs, build homes, conduct neighborhood patrols, restore the environment, respond to disasters, build nonprofit capacity and recruit and manage other volunteers."

This year, the Corporation for National and Community Service will commit more than \$9,300,000 to support Montana communities through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America.

To view the full report, visit:

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/volunteering/index.asp> The report comes as the nation recognizes National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, during which Americans are encouraged to reach out and help others in need. Volunteer efforts are helping to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility across our country.

To learn more about programs in your area or how to get involved, contact Governor's Commission on Community Service Executive Director Linda Carlson by phone: 406-444-2573, cell: 459-8748, or by email [lcarlson@mt.gov](mailto:lcarlson@mt.gov) or Corporation for National and Community Service State Program Director John Allen by phone: 406-449-5404, cell: 431-8864, or by email [Jallen@cns.gov](mailto:Jallen@cns.gov)

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